Ramadan Recipes

7 DAYS MENU

Sehri - Iftar - Dinner

Maria Nasir

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Cover, interior design, editing, publishing: Gill Andrews

www.gillandrews.com

First edition: June 2015

Introduction

"Fast and you will be healthy."

- al-Tibbun al-Nabawee, narrated by Abu Naeem

I have always looked forward to the month of Ramadan as the time that breaks the monotony of routine, the time that encourages and brings about positive change in lifestyle.

Just like spring cleaning, Muslim families give a thorough cleaning to their homes to welcome the holy month of fasting with reverence. I remember my mom changing the bedding, cleaning the cobwebs, decluttering the pantry and fridge before the arrival of Ramadan. One could simply sense something good was about to happen!

I continue her tradition with the same happy glow in my heart. But it's not only our homes that we need to prepare beforehand. Ramadan asks for the cleaning of mind and body as well. It's the time of caring, sharing, sacrifice, and self-training with the hope that these qualities will extend beyond this month.

Excessive eating is abhorred in Islam. Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) always encouraged eating simple food and sharing it with others.

"[...] It should be enough for the son of Adam to have a few bites to satisfy his hunger. If he wishes more, it should be: One-third for his food, one-third for his liquids, and one- third for his breath."

- Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

But contrary to the spirit of this month, it has become a norm to be greedier and over-indulgent towards food.

Lavish and extended Iftar dinner parties and deep fried, heavy and calorie loaded food buffets at restaurants are the complete negation of the purpose of fasting, especially when so many people in the world continue to starve.

How Fasting Affects Your Body

If you've never fasted before, you might think of it as something extreme and very hard to do. However, after the first couple of days your body will adjust to the new routine and kick off many processes that are beneficial for your health.

Technically, the body enters into the fasting mode almost eight to twelve hours after the last meal, when all the nutrients from the last meal are absorbed by the stomach. To produce energy, the body first uses the carbohydrates and then fats stored in it. Only if you haven't eaten for many days straight will the body begin to use the protein, entering so called starvation stage.

Since the Ramadan fast lasts only from dawn till dusk, there is no danger of starvation or breakdown of muscles for using protein as a source of energy. In fact, fasting helps the body get in the habit of using up the fat stores to produce energy, which gradually results in healthy weight loss, reduced cholesterol level and controlled high blood pressure.

Another wonderful thing that naturally happens to the body during fasting is detoxification - cleansing of the body from the harmful elements stored in the fat reservoirs. As the fat is used up, the toxins get dissolved and melt away with it too, leaving the body ready to begin its healing and restoration process.

During fasting, the body continuously diverts energy from digestive system to immune system, which makes it stronger from inside rather than weak, as people commonly believe.

How to Prepare Yourself for Fasting

To prepare their organism for the big change in eating patterns, many fast on sporadic days in Sha'aban, the month before Ramadan. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) used to fast a lot in Sha'aban, because it helps adapt to the challenges of fasting physically and psychologically.

Also, synchronising your sleep pattern with the day and night cycle, waking up for Fajar prayer and avoiding late nights will help you adjusting to the Ramadan routine faster.

If you are a big fan of the caffeine drinks, it's better to start weaning yourself off them gradually in advance. Start substituting black tea, coffee and fizzy drinks with herbal tea, lemonade and water during a couple of weeks before Ramadan.

It is also a good idea to quit unnecessary snacking and eating junk food so that you have less untimely cravings for those addictive foods during fasting.

What and How to Eat During Ramadan

"Eat of the good and wholesome things that We have provided for your sustenance, but indulge in no excess therein."

- Qur'an, Taha:89

None of the above mentioned health benefits can be achieved if we continue to consume all the wrong things in the non-fasting hours.

On the contrary, with a bad diet, instead of improving, your health can worsen. That is why every year during Ramadan a number of patients with stomach problems due to overeating and kidney problems because of dehydration rises.

A simple and balanced diet, rich in fibre, minerals, complex carbohydrate and lean protein is the best solution. On the other side, heavily processed, deep fried, rich foods and caffeine can cause heartburn, constipation, lethargy and your body losing water faster.

Sehri: the Pre-Dawn Meal

"Verily Allah and His angels send Mercy upon those who eat Sehri."

- Tabraani, narrated by Ibn Umar

When it comes to eating the early morning meal (Sehri, or Sehoor), people can be divided into two extremes. There are those who wake up at midnight to prepare elaborate breakfast with parathas (fried flat breads) served with heavy curries, and then there are those who either barely eat or don't eat anything at all out of laziness.

Both these attitudes leave a very negative impact on your body. The overeaters develop various digestion issues, while those who skip breakfast suffer from headaches, crankiness, weakness, lack of concentration and sleepiness during the day.

Sehri, therefore, is a very important meal that should be wholesome but moderate in quantity. It should include fibre to keep the stomach functions moving, like some fruit, vegetables or cereals, as well as healthy protein, like eggs, lean meat, yogurt and nuts, to keep you saturated for a longer period of time.

In this book, you will find Sehri recipes that are essentially rich in nutrients, filling without being heavy, energising and can be prepared ahead - a selection that will make you look forward to the Sehri time.

Iftar: Breaking the Fast

"When one of you is fasting, he should break his fast with dates; but if he cannot get any, then (he should break his fast) with water, for water is purifying."

- Sunan Abu-Dawud, narrated by Salman ibn Amir

The tradition of the Prophet (pbuh) was breaking the fast with a few dates, a pinch of salt, and water. Doctors today also advise breaking the fast with small portions of food and then waiting 10 minutes before consuming more food. Those who have a full meal immediately after breaking the fast may suffer from acidity, bloating and feeling too full.

Dates or some light snack with a healthy drink immediately restore the balance of sugar, minerals and fluids in your organism. After saying the Mughrib prayer which will provide your body a little time to absorb nutrients from the Iftar you can return to eating a healthy meal.

The Iftar recipes featured in this book are light and refreshing. They will not weigh you down and will provide you with instant energy, yet leaving you with some appetite to enjoy the dinner.

Dinner: the Main Meal of the Day

"Eat and drink freely: But waste not by excess, for He does not like the wasters."

- Qur'an, Al-A'raf:31

Dinner should be a balanced meal. Sticking to a single helping is wise, as it's not only easier for your digestive system but this way you'll have some appetite for the early morning meal as well.

Some of the healthy foods mentioned in the Qur'an by name are olives, pomegranates, cucumbers, figs, dates, grapes along with honey, milk and meat.

There are infinite choices of healthy foods to prepare a meal from. Here are some of my personal tips:

- Substitute paratha with plain roti.
- Instead of deep frying, shallow fry and stir fry. Eat more grilled or baked meat.
- Cut down on fish and beef, especially in hot weather, as they will make you thirstier during the day.
- Switch deep fried desserts with milk and yogurt based desserts.
- Reduce salt and oil in curries and use spices, ginger, garlic and lemon as flavour enhancers.

The dinner recipes included in this book are hearty and wholesome. They will leave you satisfied after a day of fasting but won't give you digestive problems or prevent you from getting up early in the morning.

The Importance of Staying Hydrated

Staying hydrated during fasting is even more important than having eaten enough, because dehydration instantly makes the levels of your mood and energy dip, making it harder to carry on daily chores.

If the idea of drinking plain water makes you feel swoon with boredom, the good news is there are many other delicious and healthy sources to help quench your thirst.

Yogurt is my personal favourite to keep away thirst for a longer time, as one cup of yogurt contains an impressive 85% of water, in addition to the other benefits like good bacteria for the gut and loads of calcium.

Other than regular fruit juices, lettuce, cucumber, tomato, watermelon and coconut water are excellent sources of replenishing body fluids as well.

The recipes for the beverages included in this book will provide you with new fun ideas to quench your thirst using natural ingredients.

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From my childhood, I remember Ramadan as a fun month. Waking up long before sunrise, looking outside the window at a completely dark sky and watching the lights in the neighbours' kitchens turning on one by one - it warmed my heart with a strong feeling of being part of a community that was doing something together.

Our Sehris used to be simple: Plain rotis with yogurt, omelette or lamb mince. I used to drink water till the last moment, feeling scared that I would feel very thirsty in the morning, but gradually, I realised that once I entered the state of fasting, a complete calm and patience supported me till an hour or so before it was Iftar time.

It was one of those evenings when I realised what it was like not to have those simple luxuries in life that I took so much for granted.

My mother used to prepare a simple Iftar, but cooked it in bulk to distribute among people who gathered outside our house every evening. We broke our fast with dates, lemonade or milk shake, and some fruit salad.

After Mughrib prayer I helped my mom with the dinner preparation. A meal like any other day looked so special because I learnt to value it by waiting for it for so many hours.

Now, when I see the same excitement in my daughters to fast and the eagerness to have dinner at night, I hope that this experience will breed in them the gratitude for what they have and the empathy for those who are less fortunate.

The handpicked recipes in this book of 7 days Ramadan menu are the ones that my family and I have enjoyed through the years. But most importantly, each of these recipes corresponds to the requirements of healthy eating. Put together in a menu, they create a perfect nutrition plan for your body and your taste buds during the holy month of fasting.

May this Ramadan bring you the utmost in peace and prosperity.

Ramadan Mubarak!

Maria

Day 1

Start your day with a delicious protein packed breakfast of the tomato French toast with scrambled eggs and cheese.

At Iftar, let the cool and minty watermelon punch quench your thirst while you treat yourself to the energy boosting stuffed dates and figs in honey.

And last but not the least, indulge in a very flavourful chicken pasanday curry.

Tomato French Toast

Sehri

vegetarian

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2

Ingredients:

For Tomato French Toast:

4 bread slices
2 eggs
2 tomatoes, skins removed, puréed
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
1 teaspoon red chilli f lakes
a small bunch fresh coriander, chopped
1/4 cup oil for shallow frying

For Scrambled Eggs:

4 eggs
1/4 cup milk
1/4 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
salt for seasoning
1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
green chilli peppers or spring onions for garnishing

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the French Toast:

1. Beat the eggs with salt and red chilli flakes. Fold in the tomato purée and coriander.
2. Heat two tablespoons of **oil** in a frying pan.
3. Dip a slice of **bread** on both sides in the egg mixture, put it in the pan and fry on medium low heat till crisp and golden on both sides.
4. Repeat with the rest of the slices and keep them warm while you prepare scrambled eggs.

Prepare the Scrambled Eggs:

1. Heat the **butter** or the **oil** on medium low heat in a clean frying pan.
2. Break the **eggs** in a bowl, but don't beat them. Slide them into the pan.
3. After a few seconds when they begin to set, gradually add a little **milk** at a time and scramble them softly with a spoon, breaking and mixing the yolks with the whites and the milk.
4. Turn off the heat while the eggs are still soft. They will continue to cook a while even after the heat is turned off.
5. Place two slices of the toast on a plate and spoon half of the scrambled eggs over them.
6. Sprinkle the **cheese** and the **chillies** or the herbs of your choice. Season lightly with salt.

7. Prepare the other platter the same way. Serve warm.

Watermelon Punch

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

6 cups watermelon flesh, diced and deseeded
1/2 litre plain soda water or any colourless soft drink
24 ice cubes
2 tablespoons powdered sugar (omit sugar if using sweet soft drink)
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt or to taste

This Is What You Do:

1. Add **all the ingredients except of the soda** to the blender. Whiz till the ice gets slushy
2. Add the soda or the **soft drink** of your choice, and whiz again for a few seconds.
3. Rub the rim of the glasses with the **lemon wedges** to moisten them so that the salt will stick.
4. Empty 1/4 cup of **salt** in a saucer. Dip the mouth of a glass in the salt and pour the punch in the glass.
5. Repeat till you have used all the punch.
6. You can also serve this punch in a punch bowl, or - even better – in a half of a watermelon shell with thin lemon slices and fresh mint leaves floating in it.

Stuffed Figs and Dates in Honey

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 16 dates, 8 figs

Ingredients:

For Stuffed Dates:

16 dates, pitted
1/4 cup almonds
1/4 cup peanuts
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon olive oil

For Figs in Honey:

8 dried figs
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons honey
1 cup water

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the Dates:

1. Make sure there is no grit on the dates. If you don't have soft dates, soak the hard ones in warm water for 15 minutes. Remove stones.
2. Heat the **oil** in a frying pan on medium low heat. Add the **almonds** and the **peanuts** and stir fry them till they are lightly toasted.
3. Stir in the **salt**, mix.
4. Let the almonds and the peanuts cool down. Put them in a plastic bag and crush them with a rolling pin.
5. Fill about 1/2 teaspoon in each date. The dates will look like little boats filled with nuts.

Prepare the Figs:

1. Heat the **water** in a saucepan and add **all the other ingredients**. Cook on medium low heat for 5 minutes.
2. Turn the heat off, cover the pan and let it covered till the figs turn soft and swell up. Serve together with the syrup.

Chicken Pasanday Curry

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 1 hour

Servings: 2-3

Note:

For this recipe, you would need to marinate the chicken for at least 30-60 minutes. It may be a good idea to do it one day before and marinade the chicken overnight.

Ingredients:

1/2 kg chicken breasts
1+1/2 cup plain yogurt
1 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
2 medium onions, sliced
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander seeds

1 teaspoon red chilli flakes
1 teaspoon sesame seeds
1/2 teaspoon green cardamom seeds
2 cloves
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon garam masala
salt to taste
1/4 cup vegetable oil or ghee

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the Marinade:

1. Heat half the **oil** in a deep frying pan. Add the **onions** and fry till golden brown.
2. Remove from the oil and set aside. When cool enough to handle, mince them with your fingers.
3. Lightly toast **cumin**, **coriander**, **sesame**, and **cardamom seeds**, **chilli flakes** and **cloves** on a skillet for 2 minutes or till aromatic.
4. Grind these dry spices in a dry mill to a coarse powder.
5. Add the onions, ginger-garlic paste, dry spices, garam masala and salt to yogurt. Mix well.

Marinade the Chicken:

1. Cut the **chicken** breast fillets into strips. Gently pound the meat with a kitchen hammer or a wooden pestle to f latten it.
2. Add the meat to the marinade and refrigerate for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Cook the Curry:

1. Heat the remaining **oil** in the same deep frying pan. Add the **chicken** and the **yogurt marinade**. Cook on medium high heat for 5 minutes or till the meat changes colour.

2. Add 1 cup of **water**, reduce heat to medium low, cover the pan and let it simmer till the curry thickens and oil separates from it.
3. If you want more curry, add 1/2 cup more **water** and simmer for 2 minutes.
4. Turn off the heat, add a few drops of **rose water** or kewra (Pandan essence) and cover the pan for 2 minutes.
5. Serve hot with roti, naan or rice.

Day 2

There is nothing like a comforting bowl of warm, creamy porridge, topped with chunky apple cinnamon sauce to look forward to at Sehri time - a healthy breakfast that tastes like apple pie!

Iftar brings a splash of freshness with the traditional Sikanjbin drink along with a delicious melange of flavours and nutrition in strawberry, melon and cottage cheese salad.

Pan roasted lamb makes this dinner special bringing loads of flavour with only a few ingredients to satisfy your appetite in a healthy way.

Apple Cinnamon Porridge

Sehri

vegetarian

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2

Ingredients:

2 apples, peeled, cored and diced
12 tablespoons quick cooking oats (wheat or barley)
1 cup milk
1 tablespoon honey
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup water
1 tablespoons butter

This Is What You Do:

1. Sprinkle **cinnamon** over the diced **apples**. Stir to mix evenly.

2. Heat the **butter** in a sauce pan on medium low heat. Add the **apple cubes**. Stir fry till the apples are golden.
3. Add the **brown sugar** and let it melt to coat the apple pieces.
4. Remove caramelised apples from the pan and set aside keeping them warm.
5. In the same pan, bring the **water** to simmer and add the **oatmeal**. Cook till it f luffs up and softens, around 3-4 minutes.
6. Add the **milk** and the **honey**, and let it simmer on low heat for another 2-3 minutes.
7. Turn the heat off and keep covered for 5 minutes. This will make the porridge thick and creamy.
8. Ladle the porridge out in a bowl and spoon the cinnamon apples over it. Serve warm.

Lemon Sekanjabin

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

5 lemons
7-8 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon salt
1 litre water
10-12 ice cubes
a handful mint leaves

This Is What You Do:

1. Boil the **sugar** and the **water** together till the sugar is dissolved.

2. Cut the **lemons** in half and remove the seeds.
3. Add juice from 4 **lemons** and **one whole lemon** with peel and pulp to the food processor.
4. Add the **sugar syrup** and all the **remaining ingredients** and whiz till the whole lemon is blended well into the drink.
5. Serve chilled with a sprig of **mint** in the pitcher or a few leaves on top of the beverage in the glasses.

Strawberry, Melon and Cottage Cheese Salad

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 2

Ingredients:

10 strawberries
1 melon
1 cup cottage cheese
3 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
a few fresh mint leaves

This Is What You Do:

1. Mix the **mint leaves**, **balsamic vinegar** and **honey** in a bowl. Set aside for a few minutes while you prepare the fruits so that the flavour can blend in the dressing.

2. Cut off the white parts of the **strawberries** and cut the strawberries into halves.
3. Peel and cut the **melon** into bite size cubes, add to the strawberries and top with chunks of the **cottage cheese**.
4. Pour the dressing over the salad. Serve chilled.

Chokhta, Pan Roasted Lamb

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 1.5 hours

Servings: 2-3

Ingredients:

1 kg lamb/goat meat
2 1/2 cups water
a pinch asafoetida (or 1 teaspoon onion powder + 1 teaspoon ginger powder)
1 teaspoon ginger powder
1-2 teaspoons Kashmiri red chilli powder (or cayenne pepper powder)
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
4 tablespoons vegetable oil or ghee

This Is What You Do:

1. Add the **lamb**, **salt** and **asafoetida** in a deep pan.

2. Add the **water** and cover the pan.
3. Cook over medium low heat for an hour or till the meat is tender.
4. Uncover the pan and cook till the liquid dries out.
5. Add the **oil** or ghee. Fry the meat till crisp and golden brown on outside.
6. Dilute the **chilli powder** and the **ginger powder** in 1/4 cup **water**. Add to the meat. Cook another 5 minutes or till the meat takes the rich red colour from the chillies.
7. Serve hot with plain rice or f lat bread of your choice. Fresh salad (for example, a mix of onions, tomatoes and cucumbers) tastes great on the side.

Day 3

Bubble and squeak cakes which can be also made from leftovers make a quick-to-prepare nutritious breakfast.

To break the fast, make yourself a tall soothing glass of sweet or salty lassi and enjoy a delicious bowl of chickpea salad with it.

Don't go for the second helping because we are serving some soul food for dinner - the hearty and divine aloo gosht!

Bubble and Squeak Cakes

Sehri

vegetarian

Cooking Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 6 cakes

Note:

To reduce the cooking time in the morning, cook the vegetables a day before. You can also shape the cakes in advance and refrigerate them till Sehri time so that the only thing you will need to do in the morning is to fry them.

Ingredients:

big potatoes, boiled and roughly mashed
Or
cups mashed leftover potatoes
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cups freshly cooked or leftover cabbage

1 cup freshly cooked or leftover peas, carrots or any other vegetable
1 cup shredded cheese (for ex., cheddar)
3/4 cup plain flour
a stalk spring onions, chopped
a small bunch coriander or parsley, chopped
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
vegetable oil

This Is What You Do:

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of **oil** in a non-stick or heavy bottomed frying pan. Add the **onions** and sauté for a minute.
2. If you are cooking this recipe from scratch and not using already cooked vegetables, add your **vegetables** to the pan. Add very little water and cover the pan for 5 minutes or till the vegetables are tender (not mushy) and there is no more water in the pan.
3. In a big mixing bowl, add the mashed potatoes, the cooked vegetables, chopped coriander, spring onions, cheese, pepper and salt.
4. Mix the ingredients thoroughly to make chunky dough. Divide the mixture into six portions and make 6 flat cakes with it.
5. Coat each cake in plain flour on both sides. Heat the remaining oil and fry the cakes in batches till golden and crispy on both sides.
6. Serve hot with fried eggs, pickles, sausages or baked beans.

Sweet or Salty Lassi

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Servings: 2

Ingredients:

For Sweet Lassi:

2 cups yogurt
1 cup whole milk or butter milk
3 tablespoons sugar or to taste
12 ice cubes

For Salty Lassi:

2 cups yogurt
2 cups water
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

3/4 teaspoon salt or to taste
12 ice cubes

This Is What You Do:

Method 1: Using Food Processor

1. Add the **yogurt**, **milk** and **sugar** (or **salt**, depending on whether you are making sweet or salty lassi) to the food processor
2. Process till sugar/salt is completely diluted.
3. Add the **ice** and process again till frothy.

Method 2: Manually

1. Add the **yogurt**, **milk** and **sugar**/**salt** in a deep pan.
2. Beat together till sugar/salt is diluted.
3. To make it frothy, use a hand whisk, a cup, or ladle. If using a ladle, pour the lassi from the pan in the ladle and then pour it back into the pan from a height of 2 feet with a splash, repeatedly and quickly, till it gets frothy.
4. Add crushed **ice**.

Chickpea Salad with Mint-Yogurt Dressing

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2

Note:

If using fresh, non-canned chickpeas, you would need to boil them in advance.

Ingredients:

For Chickpea Salad:

2 1/2 cups chickpeas, boiled
1 cup cabbage, shredded
3/4 cup raisins
3/4 cup walnuts
a handful iceberg lettuce leaves, roughly torn

1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 tableszpoon olive oil

For Mint-Yogurt Dressing:

2 cups plain yogurt
10 mint leaves
1/2 cup fresh coriander, chopped
2 green chilli peppers
3 cloves garlic
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon salt or to taste

This Is What You Do:

1. In a frying pan, heat the **oil** on medium **heat.**
2. Add the **raisins** and the **walnuts**. Stir fry for 1-2 minutes and set aside to cool down.
3. In a large salad bowl, toss the **chickpeas**, the **cabbage** and the **lettuce leaves** together.
4. Add the stir fried **raisins** and **walnuts**. Season with pepper**.**
5. Blend all the ingredients of the dressing except of the yogurt in an electric blender. Mix with the **yogurt** and pour the dressing over the salad.

Aloo Gosht, Potato and Meat Stew

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 1.5 hours

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

1/2 kg chicken or lamb cut ups
3 big potatoes, peeled and cut into cubes
2 ripe tomatoes
2 medium onions, sliced
1 cup yogurt
4 cloves garlic
1/2 inch piece ginger, peeled
2 black cardamoms
seeds from 3-4 green cardamoms, crushed
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
garam masala to taste
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
1/4 cup vegetable oil or ghee
fresh coriander and green chillies for garnishing

This Is What You Do:

1. Heat the **oil** in a deep pan over medium heat. Add the **onions** and fry till golden brown. Don't let the onions become too dark or it will ruin the colour and the taste of the curry.
2. Remove the onions from the oil. Add the **fried onions**, **garlic**, **ginger**, **yogurt** and **tomatoes** to the food processor or electric blender. Make a smooth paste.
3. Add the **meat** and the **potatoes** to the oil. Fry till meat changes colour.
4. Add all the **dry spices** and **salt**, and sauté for 2 minutes.
5. Add the **masala paste**. Keep cooking without the lid till the gravy changes colour and the oil separates.
6. Add enough **water** to cover the ingredients in the pan. Reduce heat, cover the pan and let the stew simmer till potatoes and meat are done (35-40 minutes for chicken and 45-60 minutes for lamb).
7. If the gravy gets too reduced by the time the meat and the potatoes are done, add more water.
8. Let it simmer for another 4-5 minutes. Season with garam masala.
9. Garnish with **fresh coriander** and **green chillies**. Serve hot with rice, roti or naan.

Day 4

This nutrient, rich and delicious bowl of borani esfanaaj, a yogurt dip with spinach and walnuts, will keep you filled and hydrated for a long time.

And if mangoes are in season, then Iftar is incomplete without them. Make this delicious mango drink with the goodness of chia seeds to keep you hydrated for a longer period of time.

Enjoy a bowl of soft lentil dumplings in yogurt for a light snack, and after that load your plate with colours at dinner time with the mouth-watering chicken jalfrezi.

Borani Esfanaaj, Spinach Yogurt Dip

Sehri

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

3 cups thick yogurt
3 cups fresh spinach leaves (or 3/4 cup canned)
2 cloves garlic, crushed
salt and pepper to taste
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
toasted walnuts and dried mint for garnishing

This Is What You Do:

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of **oil** in a frying pan. Add the **garlic**. Sauté for a minute.

2. Add the **spinach leaves** and continue to sauté until leaves are soft.
3. Remove from the heat and let it cool down.
4. Squeeze out any liquid from the leaves and mash them up slightly with a fork. If you are using canned spinach, stir it into the garlic straight away (no need to squeeze).
5. Season the yogurt with **salt** and **pepper**. Stir in the spinach and garlic mix.
6. Garnish with the toasted **walnuts**, dried **mint leaves** and a generous drizzle of **olive oil.**
7. Refrigerate till serving time. This dip tastes great with bread, crunchy vegetables or kebobs.

Mango and Chia Seed Drink

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 35 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

2 big ripe mangoes
3 tablespoons chia seeds (tukhmilangan)
2 cups cold water
2 cups warm water
2 teaspoons sugar, honey, or agave nectar (optional)

Note:

This recipe will require you to soak the chia seeds for at least 2 hours (better, overnight).

This Is What You Do:

Soak the **chia seeds** in 2 cups of **warm water** for at least 2 hours or, to make it easier, overnight so that you can use them conveniently in the morning.

Cover the water and refrigerate till required. The seeds will swell up and become gelatinous.

To make mango juice, peel the **mangoes** and cut the pulp into small pieces.

Add the **mango pulp**, 2 cups of **water** and **sugar** (if using) to a blender and whiz till smooth.

Run the juice through a sieve to get rid of any fibres.

Mix the **mango juice** and the **chia seeds** in a jug and stir till both are combined well.

Add several **ice cubes** to the glasses and pour the mango chia seeds ecstasy over them.

Dahi Baray, Lentil Dumplings in Yogurt Sauce

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 35 minutes

Servings: 4

Note:

This recipe requires soaking the lentils overnight.

Ingredients:

For Lentil Dumplings:

1 cup yellow lentils (daal mash)
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
water to make the paste

vegetable oil

For Yogurt Sauce:

4 cups plain yogurt
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1 teaspoon powdered sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste

For Tamarind Chutney:

1/2 cup tamarind
1/2 inch piece ginger
1 teaspoon red chilli flakes
3 tablespoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon salt

This Is What You Do:

1. Soak the **lentils** in water overnight. Without soaking the paste will be grainy, which won't taste good.
2. Blend the **lentils** with **all the dumpling ingredients** in a food processor till a thick, smooth paste forms. Set aside for 10 minutes.

Prepare the Yogurt Sauce:

1. Mix all the ingredients for the yogurt sauce in a bowl and refrigerate.

Prepare the Tamarind Chutney:

1. Boil the **tamarind** for 5-6 minutes or till soft enough to remove seeds easily. You can also soak it in warm water for an hour to achieve the same result.

2. Remove and discard the seeds. Blend **tamarind juice and pulp**, **ginger**, **sugar**, **salt** and **red chillies** in an electric blender to a smooth paste.

Fry the Dumplings:

1. Fill a half of a big bowl with water. Keep it close by.
2. Heat the **oil** for deep frying. Check the temperature by dropping a little bit of the dumpling batter. It should rise immediately to the surface.
3. Drop the **batter** into the oil by tablespoons full. Fry for 2-3 minutes till the dumplings puff up into small balls and are golden on outside and cooked inside.
4. Drop the fried dumplings straight in the bowl with water. Keep soaked for 5 minutes, then remove and gently squeeze between your palms to get rid of extra water.
5. To serve, pour the half of the yogurt sauce in a serving dish and arrange the dumplings over it. Pour the remaining half of the yogurt sauce on top.
6. Garnish with the tamarind chutney, coriander leaves and **chaat masala** (optional).
7. If you can’t find chaat masala in your local store, you can make it yourself. You'll find the instructions for it in this book within the recipe for the fruit chaat.

Chicken Jalfrezi

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 2

Note:

This recipe requires you to marinate the chicken for 30 minutes.

Ingredients:

1/2 kg boneless chicken
2 green bell peppers, cut into cubes
2 medium onions, cut into cubes
4 tomatoes, cut into cubes
1 cup tomato purée
2 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
2 tablespoons tomato sauce or ketchup of your choice
2 green chilli peppers, chopped

1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1 teaspoon red chilli flakes
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon sugar
salt to taste
2 tablespoons vinegar
2 tablespoons sunflower or olive oil
julienned ginger and chopped fresh coriander for garnishing

This Is What You Do:

1. Cut the **chicken** into bite size chunks and marinate the chicken pieces in the **ginger garlic paste**, **tomato purée** and **vinegar** for 30 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, prepare the **vegetables** and keep all the ingredients close because it is a very quick stir fry.
3. Heat the **oil** in a deep frying pan on medium heat. Add the **chicken pieces** (without marinade) and fry till golden.
4. Add the **onions**, the **bell peppers** and the **tomato chunks**. Continue to stir fry for another 2-3 minutes or till the onions turn white.
5. Add the cumin, coriander and red chilli flakes and powder and continue to stir fry.
6. Add the **marinade**, **sugar** and the **tomato sauce**. Cover the pan and continue to cook for 3-4 minute or till the bell peppers and the tomatoes are tender but not mushy. Traditionally, it is a dry curry, so don’t leave any liquids unless more gravy is what you want.
7. Garnish with some green chilli peppers, ginger and **coriander leaves**. Serve hot.

Day 5

Sehri time doesn't have to be conventional. This breakfast pizza is sure to make you wait for the morning meal.

At Iftar, the delicious combination of milk and almonds will provide immediate comfort. Serve it warm or chilled with some creamy and zesty apple zucchini salad with roasted nuts.

Remember to save some appetite for a hearty plate of chicken pulao for dinner.

Breakfast Pizza

Sehri

vegetarian

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

4 pita breads
4 eggs
1 cup mozzarella (or other cheese of your choice, like feta or cheddar)
2 tomatoes, sliced
1/2 cup olives, sliced
2 green chilli peppers or bell peppers, sliced
1/2 cup pesto (or tomato sauce, or olive oil)
dried oregano and thyme to taste (or other herbs of your choice)

This Is What You Do:

1. Heat the oven to its highest temperature (mine goes up to 300C/570F).

2. Place the **pita breads** on an oven proof tray and spread the **tomato sauce** or the **pesto** on them.
3. Place the **vegetables** and the **cheese** all over the rounds.
4. Break an **egg** in the centre of each pizza.
5. Season with **salt**, **pepper** and **herbs**.
6. Bake for 8-10 minutes or till the whites are set. If you don’t want the yolks runny bake another 2 minutes. Serve hot.

Doodh Badam, Almond Milk

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 1

Ingredients:

20 almonds
1 1/4 cups milk
2 tablespoons honey
a few drops almond essence
a pinch ground cardamom or seeds of 2 cardamom pods
chopped almonds for garnishing (optional)

This Is What You Do:

For the Hot Version:

1. Soak the **almonds** in warm water for 20 minutes. Drain the water and skin the almonds.
2. Heat 1 cup of **milk** over low heat.
3. Add the cardamom powder or cardamom seeds, and honey.
4. Blend the **almonds** with 1/4 cup of **milk** in a food processor till smooth paste forms. Add the paste to the hot milk.

For the Cold Version:

1. Follow the recipe above.
2. Let the milk come to room temperature.
3. Add **10 ice cubes** and whiz in an electric blender till frothy and slushy.

Apple and Zucchini in Hazelnut-Garlic Sauce

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 3-4

Ingredients:

2 zucchini, thinly sliced
2 apples, cored and sliced
2 cloves garlic
1/2 cup hazelnuts or cashew nuts, roasted
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 cup parsley or coriander leaves
2 tablespoons yogurt
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper for seasoning

This Is What You Do:

1. If using fresh nuts, roast them and set aside to cool.
2. Keep a big bowl of iced water ready.
3. Blanch the **apple** and **zucchini** slices for 2-3 minutes in boiling water till they are slightly tender but still crisp.
4. Scoop apples and zucchini out of the boiling water with a slotted spoon and plunge them in cold water.
5. Add the garlic, nuts, yogurt, parsley, lemon juice and **olive oil** to blender. Grind to a smooth paste.
6. Arrange the apples and the zucchini on a salad plate. Season with **salt** and **pepper**.
7. Drizzle the hazelnut-garlic sauce over them and garnish with more chopped nuts.

Chicken Pulao

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

1/2 kg chicken, cut up
2 1/2 cups long grained basmati rice, soaked
1 onion
2 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
2 pods black cardamom
4 pods green cardamom
2 sticks cinnamon
5-6 black pepper corns
2 teaspoons cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon garam masala

2 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/3 cup vegetable oil
green chilli pepper and fresh coriander leaves, chopped for garnishing

This Is What You Do:

1. Heat the **oil** in a deep pan with a wide mouth over medium heat. Fry the **onions** till they are brown (not burnt).
2. Add the **chicken pieces** and fry them for 2-3 minutes till the juices are sealed.
3. Add the **ginger-garlic paste**, **black cardamoms**, **green cardamoms**, **cinnamon**, **black pepper corns**, **cumin seeds**, **coriander seeds**, **salt and garam masala**.
4. Add 1 cup of **water**, cover the pan and cook for two minutes.
5. Add the **rice** and enough **water** to cover the rice 1 inch over its surface.
6. Cover the pan and let it simmer for almost 10-15 minutes or till the rice is tender and most of the broth has dried up.
7. Reduce the heat to the minimum. Place a skillet under the pan with the rice, wrap the lid in a kitchen towel and cover the pan tightly.
8. Leave it this way for another 5-10 minutes. The rice shall be ready when the rice corns are not starchy anymore, i.e. don't cling together and are not sticky when you touch them.
9. Garnish with some chopped **green chilli peppers** and **coriander leaves**. Serve hot with mint yogurt and fresh salad.

Day 6

Preparing an elaborate meal for Sehri is not what I look forward to. Fluffy omelette in curry is a recipe where you can prepare the curry ahead and just add the omelette to it before serving.

Iced tea is one of my most favourite summer drinks. There is something very calming about the delicious aroma of apple with cinnamon.

For a healthy Iftar snack, try paludah, as nothing rejuvenates the body after a day of fasting like a bowl of chilled fruit salad that smells like roses.

Dinner will be as usual wholesome, hearty and comforting. Enjoy some chickpeas and meatballs curry with rice or roti.

Fluffy Omelette Curry

Sehri

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 35 minutes

Servings: 2

Note:

To reduce the cooking time during Sehri, prepare the curry in advance.

Ingredients:

For Omelette:

4 eggs
1 stalk spring onion, finely chopped
1/2 teaspoon red chilli powder
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1 green chilli pepper, finely chopped
1/4 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

For Curry:

1 medium onion, chopped
4 ripe tomatoes, puréed
1 tablespoon ginger-garlic paste
1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1/2 teaspoon mustard seeds
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
2 tablespoon vegetable oil
green chilli peppers, coriander/parsley, ginger, spring onions for garnishing

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the Curry:

1. Heat the **oil** in a deep frying pan. Add the chopped **onions**. Fry till light golden.
2. Add **cumin**, **coriander** and **mustard seeds**. Sauté for a minute or till the seeds begin to splutter.
3. Add the ginger-garlic paste, salt, red chillies and turmeric.
4. Add the tomato purée.

Prepare the Omelette:

1. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to medium low. Allow it to simmer for 8-10 minutes or till the curry thickens and oil separates from the sauce.
2. Meanwhile, break the **eggs** into a bowl. Add **salt**, **red chillies** and **cumin powder**. Beat till fluffy.

3. Fold in the chopped **green chilli peppers** and the spring onions**.**
4. Heat the **oil** in a frying pan. Make the omelettes in two or three batches. Cook till they are light golden on both sides.
5. Roll up the omelettes and cut into 1/2 inch pinwheels.
6. Add to the curry and garnish with the **spring onions**, some **green chillies**, **parsley** or julienned **ginger**. Serve hot with your favourite bread.

Apple Cinnamon Iced Tea

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 1 pitcher

Ingredients:

6 cups water
2 tea bags Twinings' Breakfast Tea or any tea of your choice
2 cups apple juice
2 sticks cinnamon
1 tablespoon lemon juice lemon wedges
1/2 cup honey or sugar syrup
12 cubes ice

This Is What You Do:

1. Bring 4 cups of **water** to boil. Add the **cinnamon sticks** and let it simmer on low heat for 10 minutes.

2. Turn the heat off, add 2 **tea bags** of your favourite tea and let it brew for another 10 minutes.
3. Scoop out the tea bags and the cinnamon sticks. Add the brewed tea to a pitcher.
4. Add the apple juice and 2 cups cold water.
5. Fill the rest of the pitcher with lots of **ice**.
6. Serve with **lemon wedges** and **sugar syrup** on the side.

Paludah, Melon and Peach Salad

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

1 big melon
6 peaches
3 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons rosewater
a pinch salt
lots of crushed ice

This Is What You Do:

1. Cut the **melon** in half. Scoop out the flesh with a fruit baller or a big spoon.

2. Peel the **peaches**, cut them in halves and remove stones.
3. Add the fruits to a deep salad bowl and drizzle some **honey** over them.
4. Add the **lemon juice** and the **rosewater**. Sprinkle with salt.
5. Thoroughly toss everything together. Before serving, top with crushed or cubed **ice**.

Chana Kofta, Chickpeas and Meatballs Curry

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 1 hour 45 minutes
Servings: 12 meatballs

Note:

If using fresh, not canned chickpeas, this recipe will require you to soak the chickpeas overnight.

Ingredients:

For Chickpeas Curry:

2 cups chickpeas, canned or soaked in water overnight
1 medium onion, chopped
4 ripe tomatoes, skins removed
2 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
2 black cardamoms

1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon salt or to taste
1/4 cup vegetable oil

For Chicken Meatballs:

1/2 kg ground chicken
1 egg
1 slice white bread (for a gluten-free version, omit bread and add 2 tablespoons gram f lour)
2 cloves garlic
1 teaspoon onion powder
2 green chilli peppers
1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1/2 cup fresh coriander or parsley leaves
1 teaspoon salt

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the Meatballs Mixture:

1. Whiz all the ingredients for the chicken meatballs in a food processor till mixed thoroughly.
2. Wet your hands and make medium sized meatballs. Cover and refrigerate them till the chickpea curry is done.

Make the Chickpea Curry:

1. Heat the **oil** in a deep pan over medium heat. Add the **onions** and fry till golden brown.
2. Remove the pan from the heat. Place the **fried onions** and the **tomatoes** in an electric blender and make a smooth paste.
3. Put the pan back on the stove. Add the **onion-tomato paste**, the **ginger-garlic paste**, **salt** and **all the spices**. Stir fry till the mixture

gets a vibrant orange colour and the oil separates from the sauce.

4. Add the **chickpeas** and fill half of the pan with water. Turn the heat to low, cover the pan and let it simmer till the chickpeas are tender but not mushy (if you are using raw chickpeas, at least 1 hour). Add more water if necessary.

Add the Meatballs to the Curry:

1. Add the prepared **meatballs** directly to the pan with curry (no need to fry separately).
2. If the liquid is reduced, add more **water** for the desired consistency of the curry. I add 2 cups because I like this curry with thin soupy consistency.
3. Cover the pan and let the meatballs simmer in the curry for 15 minutes.
4. Garnish with some **green chilli peppers**. Serve hot with roti or steamed rice, or simply dig in with a spoon.

Day 7

Eating eggs for breakfast doesn't have to be boring, especially if you are making this bright and beautiful North African chakchouka.

For Iftar, make some cool carrot and citrus juice to revitalise your senses and double the fun with some salty, spicy and tangy fruit chaat.

End the day on a scrumptious note with melt-in-the- mouth namkeen gosht.

Chakchouka, Eggs with Vegetables

Sehri

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2

Ingredients:

4 eggs
1 onion, chopped
1 red or green bell peppers, cut into long, narrow strips
2 eggplants, cut into strips or cubes
4 tomatoes, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon paprika
2 red chilli peppers, chopped (optional)
2 tablespoons olive oil
salt to taste

This Is What You Do:

1. Warm 2 tablespoons of **oil** in a large non-stick frying pan over medium low heat.
2. Add the **onions** and the **garlic**. Sauté for a minute.
3. Add the eggplants, the bell pepper and the tomatoes and continue to sauté for another 2 minutes.
4. Cover the pan and let it simmer over low heat until all the vegetables are tender but not limp and the tomatoes are sauce-like.
5. Season the vegetables with **salt**, **paprika**, **cumin** and **chilli peppers**, if using.
6. Remove the lid. Make 4 hollows in the vegetable mixture using a spoon. Break one **egg** into each hollow. The heat should be low.
7. Cover and cook until the eggs are set, for about 4-5 minutes. Serve hot with or without bread.

Carrot Citrus Juice

Iftar (Beverage)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 2 glasses

Note:

For this recipe, you'll need to prepare rosewater ice cubes at least 1 hour in advance.

Ingredients:

For Carrot Citrus Juice:

7-8 medium carrots, cut into 1 inch pieces
2 oranges, peeled, deseeded
1 large grapefruit, peeled, deseeded
1 lemon
1 inch piece ginger, peeled

1/2 teaspoon black pepper
a pinch of salt

For Mint and Rosewater Ice Cubes:

2 cups water
1 teaspoon rosewater
a handful of fresh mint leaves

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the Ice Cubes:

1. Thoroughly wash the fresh **mint leaves**. Place 2-3 leaves in each ice cube mould.
2. Mix 1 teaspoon of **rose water** with 2 cups of water.
3. Pour the mixture into the cube moulds.
4. Set in the freezer till hard.

Prepare the Juice:

1. Extract the juice from the **carrots**, the **oranges**, the **grape fruits** and the **ginger** in a food processor or an electric juicer.
2. Mix all the juices. Squeeze in a **lemon**, stir in **salt** and pepper**.**
3. Serve the juice with the mint and rosewater ice cubes for extra freshness and panache.

Fruit Chaat, Sweet and Sour Fruit Salad

Iftar (Snack)

vegetarian, gluten-free

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Servings: 6

Ingredients:

For the Fruit Salad:

2 bananas, peeled, sliced
2 apples, cored and cubed
3 guavas, cored and cubed
3 oranges, peeled, segmented, deseeded
2 boiled potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 cup pomegranate seeds
1 medium onion, chopped
juice of 2 oranges
juice of 1 lemon
4 tablespoons plain yogurt

For Simple Seasoning:

1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1 teaspoon cumin powder
1 teaspoon powdered sugar
1 teaspoon salt

For Traditional Spice Mix (Chaat Masala):

1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1/2 teaspoon coriander seeds
2 black cardamoms
1/2 teaspoon carom seeds
1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds
1 teaspoon red chilli powder
1 tablespoon mango powder
1/2 teaspoon Indian black salt
1 teaspoon black pepper powder
a pinch asafoetida
1/2 teaspoon salt

This Is What You Do:

Prepare the Seasoning:

1. **For the simple seasoning**, mix all ingredients and keep aside.
2. **For the traditional seasoning**, toast the whole spices on a hot skillet and grind in a dry mill. Mix with the remaining spices, set aside to use later. You can double the quantity of ingredients. The spice mix will store well in a jar for many weeks.

Prepare the Fruit Salad:

1. Mix all the **fruits** and **vegetables** in a big bowl.
2. Add the yogurt, and lemon and orange juices.

3. Add all of the simple seasoning OR add one teaspoon of the traditional seasoning at a time, mix and taste till it reaches your required level of tang and spiciness.
4. Keep the fruit salad chilled till served. By the time you will serve it, the juices released from the fruits and yogurt will mix to make a delicious syrupy sauce.

Namkeen Gosht, Slow Cooked Lamb Joints

Dinner

gluten-free

Cooking Time: 2.5 hours

Servings: 2

Note:

The quantity of salt may seem high in this recipe, but salt is both meat tenderiser and tastemaker here. You can of course adjust the quantity according to your taste.

Ingredients:

2 lamb joints
2 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
1 teaspoon whole black peppercorn
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 cups flour to make dough for sealing the pot

This Is What You Do:

1. Heat the **oil** in a frying pan on medium high heat. Add the **lamb joints** and fry for 5-6 minutes till the juices are properly sealed and the meat is golden brown on the outside.
2. Grind the **pepper corns**, **coriander** and **cumin** in a mortar.
3. In an earthenware pot, add the **joints** and **the rest of the ingredients**. Add 3 cups **water**.
4. Knead firm **dough** with flour and water. Cover the pan and seal the tiny creek between the lid and the pot with dough completely so that no steam can escape.
5. Cook on very low heat for almost 2 hours. The meat should be falling off the bones by the time it's done. Serve hot with naan bread.

About the Author

A former English language and literature teacher from Lahore, Pakistan, Maria Nasir is a hands-on mom for whom cooking is an expression of love, generosity and warmth. She handles parties for over forty people at her home single-handedly with ease.

Maria's blog Foodaholic.biz is a complete package of tried and tested recipes, helpful tips, food facts and interesting quotes.

Besides cooking, Maria enjoys reading books and painting.